

The Tribune Institute

Housekeeping as a Profession

ARE YOU SURE YOUR PILLOW DOES NOT CARRY DISEASE?

The Housewife Who Would Banish Illness from Her Home Would Better Be Sure That She Does Not Buy Second-hand Feathers to Sleep On

By ANNE LEWIS PIERCE and JENOISE BROWN
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NOT long ago a thinking woman wrote to The Tribune, and said: "This is a fly-swating, milk-sterilizing, clean-up generation, and it seems to me that the next step should be to prevent infection from second-hand feathers. There ought to be a law; perhaps there is one. Is there?"

There is; and in the wake of the law is a growing industry for the purification of our pillows.

This question which the woman asked is a perfectly rational one, yet to how many of us has occurred any doubt as to the condition of the pillows upon which we are sleeping—the same pillows which have probably been in the family for years?

And if they are not family pillows, have any of us ever wondered just where the contents came from? Are the feathers old, new or indifferent? Have they ever been used by persons having contagious diseases?

NEED FOR FEATHER LAWS
Just a little thought on the much neglected subject of pillows will convince one that there should be feather laws which the manufacturers cannot evade, and which demand the sale of only new and completely sterilized feathers to the consumer.

Let each family use its own feathers, but the practice of selling these feathers, perhaps contaminated, of indifferent sterilization of the same, and of selling them to the innocent consumer should be stopped.

And the honest feather man is working hard to this end.

There has been feather legislation in New York as well as in other states, but only in one state—Pennsylvania—has the law been made stringent enough to prevent entirely the sale of second-hand feathers. In Philadelphia alone over 100,000 mattresses have been condemned the last year as having been made from second-hand, infected feathers.

The New York law requires that every mattress, pillow, cushion, muf bed, down quilt or bag shall be branded with the kind of material

of which it is made—hair, down or feathers. If the material has been previously used it must be marked "Second-Hand."

Like many a law, this one is but indifferently enforced, and it is difficult for the layman to tell old feathers from new. The expert, though, can tell at a glance, chiefly by the fact that nearly all old feathers are broken up and lifeless.

What happened in the good old days when grandmother grew and picked and made her own feather bed? She did not remove the lumen—or animal matter—from the quill. She had no live steam or electricity or chemicals to kill the bacteria and remove the animal matter threatening both the sweetness and the healthfulness of the finished pillow.

HOW GRANDMOTHER MANAGED

But with the good common sense and thoroughness that has made the oldtime housewife the pioneer of many a modern theory, she baked or sun-dried her feathers and so approximated the same end.

Unhappily, to-day 65 per cent of our pillow feathers are second-hand; feathers none too clean. Grandmother at least got a good start—her feathers came from her own ducks and geese, not from the tenement ashcan, and she knew who had died on her feather bed, and why.

When it came to cleaning feather pillows the practice among our grandmothers varied. Some only sunned and beat and aired and emptied the contents into fresh ticks. Others, who had a sanitary premonition, made a four-day job of it.

THE THOROUGH WAY OF DOING IT

They sewed a bag of unbleached muslin the exact size of the pillow tick to the open end of the old pillow, hung the pillow by the opposite edge to the line, and allowed the wind and gravity to empty the feathers into the new cover. The unbleached pillow was then sewed up and washed in a soapy solution of lukewarm water; then rinsed five times in warm water—a little cooler with each rinsing—until the last one was cold. It took three or four days for



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A Maud Muller in the Sterilizing Plant
Tossing the Feathers to Dry
Them After Washing.

the pillow to sun-dry. The feathers were then returned to the old tick, which in the meantime had been thoroughly scrubbed.

The threat of the olden days was the "renovator man," who came around with a large covered van containing mysterious machinery and promised to renovate old pillows.

He inveigled the trusting housewife into letting him have her ancestral pillows, which he opened up and emptied of their contents.

He then cleaned the feathers slightly by blowing out some dust or dirt, put a portion of them back in the ticks and returned the pillows to the owner—substituting air for feathers to as great an extent as he dared. And more than often he was very daring.

The stolen feathers were passed on to the manufacturer, who offered them to the public in the form of new pillows. The housewife and her family slept on air and a few feathers. The best of modern practice requires that all

See That the Laws Are Enforced and Take Care That Only New, Clean Feathers Are Used in Your Pillows and Cushions—You Can Get Them!

feathers, new or old, should be sterilized and the lumen or animal matter removed and the quill destroyed. This is done in specially equipped factories. In addition, the feathers are made sterile by using live steam and an agitating machine. Others use an electrochemical process.

In one factory the electrical process involves some thirteen different stages, beginning with dry beating and wet churning, then drying, separating into "down," "half-down" and "feathers," followed by the electrical-chemical treatment which disinfects and reaches the inside of the quill.

Most of our feathers come all the way from

China. The Chinese do not use feather pillows, and as they raise great numbers of fowl they have become large feather exporters. These feathers are partly cleaned when they leave China, and are examined before entering this country, but they are still very dirty, and in some cases about 50 per cent of dirt by weight has been extracted in the cleaning process.

A whitened sepulchre is a mild description of a snowy, linen-covered pillow with 50 per cent of barnyard dirt from China concealed within its midst.

THIS IS WHERE YOU SHOULD KNOW WHAT YOU ARE BUYING

Watch your tags when buying pillows and see that sanitation is assured.

Aside from original dirt, we have to consider the dangers of infection from disease transmitted by pillows and mattresses.

One of the earliest instances, which aroused alarm on this score, was an epidemic of twenty-one cases of cholera on shipboard traced to old feather beds belonging to the emigrants.

Cases of tuberculosis have also been traced to bedding on Pullmans, where persons suffering from this disease have slept.

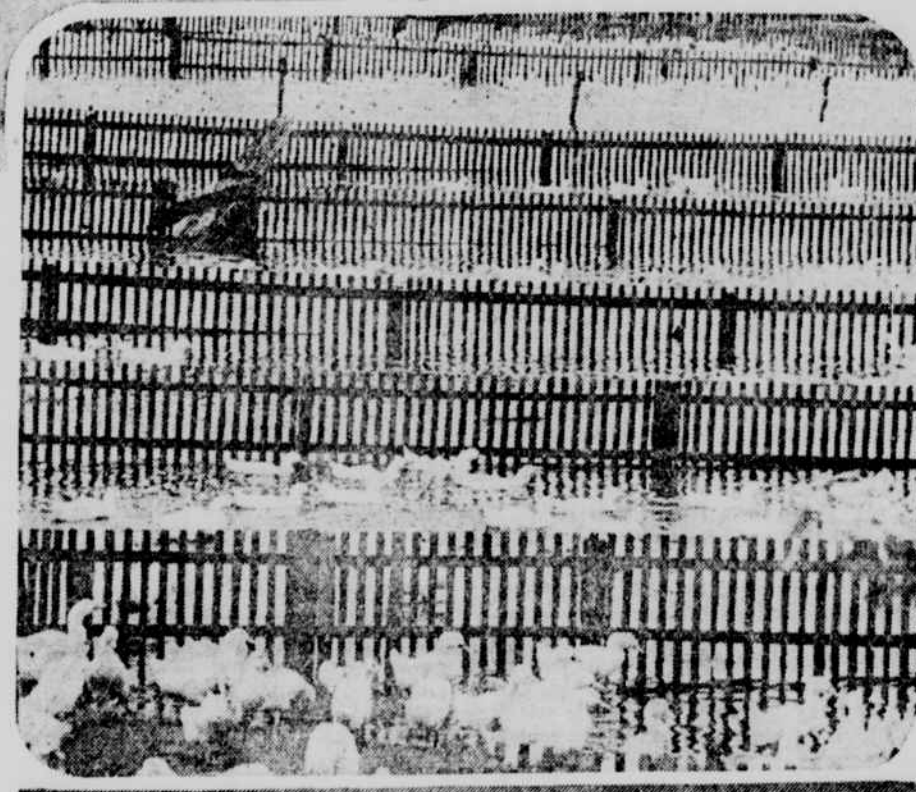
In the hospitals for contagious diseases, where there is most danger of transmitting diseases, the problem of sterilizing pillows reaches its most acute stage. The pillows and mattresses are put in a large sterilizer or autoclave, in which live steam under a pressure of twelve to fifteen pounds replaces a vacuum, penetrates all kinds of fabrics and insures sterilization. This treatment at a temperature of 250 degrees Fahrenheit is continued for thirty minutes.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO KEEP PILLOWS CLEAN

What of the housekeeper—under ordinary conditions or when there has been infectious illness in the home?

Under ordinary conditions, if the feathers are sanitary and sterilized when bought, the washing practised by our grandmothers is all-sufficient. In the case of any form of contagious illness the pillows should be sent to a reliable firm equipped for sterilizing.

The local Board of Health should be consulted as to where to send pillows and mattresses for sterilization.



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Feathers from the Right Source—The Well
Regulated Duck Farm.

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Swat the Winter Fly

By WILLIAM E. SIMMONS

WITH insolent assurance the deadly housefly comes into your home at the approach of cold weather to hibernate for the winter.

Don't let him do it!
Kill him on sight!
The significance of killing every fly found in the house during the winter time is little realized. To realize it one must be aware of the amazing fecundity of the fly.

Dr. L. O. Howard, of the Entomological Bureau of the United States Department of Agriculture, has ascertained that a female fly will lay at least 120 eggs at one time, and the same female may lay more than one set during the season. On the basis of a single laying, Dr. Howard has prepared a table showing that by the middle of September the progeny of that individual fly will be 5,598,720,000,000 adults.

Now, that fruitful female, instead of laying only one batch of eggs, may have laid four such batches.

Dr. Howard dryly remarks: "The task of estimating the possibilities on the larger basis is left to some reader who likes to multiply."

We can see now what it means to kill a single fly in the winter time—trillions less flies in the summer time!

Much importance is attached by experts to attacking the fly in its breeding places, and truly this cannot be overestimated. But, at the same time, too little attention has been given to the importance of killing flies found about the house in the winter.

It has been shown that the fly under favoring circumstances will even breed in the house in winter, but such circumstances are, to say the least, unusual. Yet it is indubitable that every fly surviving until spring becomes a serious menace to public health. For this reason householders should carefully scan all nooks and corners after the advent of cold weather and kill every fly in sight.

As to the hibernating habit of flies, Dr. Howard says:

"The typhoid (deadly) fly apparently suddenly disappears with the first sharp frost. It will reappear later on the warmest days. With a great reduction of the temperature of their breeding places many larvae are killed, and eggs as well. Whether the pupae in their tight puparia are destroyed by a certain degree of cold does not seem to be known. The adult flies undoubtedly linger in warmed houses throughout the winter, but that enough of them remain in active condition in such locations to perpetuate the species and to start the rapidly multiplying generations of the following summer seems doubtful. The adult flies undoubtedly remain dormant even in warmed dwell-



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Feathers from the Wrong Source; First Step: An Old Pillow Finds Rest in the Garbage Can; Second Step: Retrieved by the Ragpicker.

HOW TO GET PURIFIED PILLOWS

WITH feathers an ounce of prevention is worth several pounds of cure. Read the tags on the pillows you buy to see if the feathers are new. Dirty feathers, from which the lumen or protein matter in the quill has not been removed, carrying barnyard filth, mean a "smelly" pillow; with possible danger from disease. It is very difficult to purify them perfectly, even by factory methods.

Never buy pillows made of second-hand feathers. You can never tell whence they came or whither they go.

This was where our grandmother got her start. She had feathers of known origin, from her own barnyard, sun or oven baked, and she changed the ticks faithfully, often with thorough washing of the feathers themselves.

Modern cleaning establishments, using either live steam or an electrochemical process, offer the housekeeper every opportunity for the bacteriological cleanliness of her feather beds and pillows. If the inside of the cup should be clean, so also should the inside of the pillow.

Buy only pillows made in factories which have a process for the complete sterilization. One woman, after seeing a film picture of the factory method of removing dirt from feathers and the mute evidence of how much it was needed, wrote to the factory for a supply of the sterilized article, saying that she hadn't had a night's sleep since seeing the pictures.

Uneasy lies the conscious head that rests on unsterilized feathers!

When the Chestnut Burrs Are Open

By VIRGINIA CARTER LEE



WITH the opening of the chestnut burrs in many localities where these delicious little nuts may be had for the gathering, and with the appearance in the markets of the big French and Italian chestnuts, recipes for their best preparation should be collected and tried by the housewife, who may not realize that they may be used in an infinite variety of tempting dishes, from a simple chestnut soup to the elaborate dainty known as Nesselrode pudding.

Undoubtedly, for all cooking purposes, the Italian or French chestnuts are to be preferred to our smaller American variety, but if the latter are carefully prepared they form a very satisfactory substitute.

To shell and blanch chestnuts at the same time, slit each nut shell across the flat side with a sharp pointed knife. Cook for a couple of minutes in boiling water, drain well and let dry. Add a teaspoonful of butter for each pint of nuts and stir and shake in a hot oven or over a moderate heat for three or four minutes. Then with a sharp knife take off the shell. As the skins adhere to the shells, shelling and blanching are accomplished at one and the same time. Keep the nuts covered with a thick cloth until you are ready for them, as they shell more easily while hot.

As examples of preparing them to the best advantage, the following tested recipes are given:

CHESTNUT PUREE

Cook a pint of blanching chestnuts in sufficient water to cover them until the nuts are very tender. Then press while hot through a fine sieve. Add one scant quart of well-seasoned stock and stir until the boiling point is reached. Put a tablespoonful of butter into an agateware saucepan and, when melted, stir in one tablespoonful of flour; next pour in very gradually a cupful and a half of milk and stir until the sauce boils and is very smooth. Add this to the chestnut stock, season to taste with salt, white pepper and celery salt, and, just previous to serving, stir in one well beaten egg. Do not boil the soup after the egg is added, and serve very hot with crisp croutons or toast squares.

CHESTNUT STUFFING

This is a favorite dressing for chicken or turkey. Cook three cupfuls of blanching nuts in salted water to cover, and when very tender mash to a paste. Add one scant pint of grated bread crumbs, three tablespoonfuls of melted butter, one heaping teaspoonful of salt, half a teaspoonful of pepper, one tablespoonful of finely minced celery tops and one teaspoonful of poultry seasoning. This gives a dry dress-

ing. If a moist one is preferred, mix in one small cupful of strained stock. The bird to be roasted should be stuffed with the dressing five or six hours before cooking as the nuts impart a delicious, rich flavor to the meat.

CHESTNUT CROQUETTES

Mash blanching nuts that have been boiled until tender, to a smooth paste, and to each cupful allow half a cupful of grated bread crumbs, one teaspoonful of melted butter, salt, paprika and celery salt to taste, and sufficient beaten egg to hold the mixture together. Spread out on a flat dish and, when perfectly cold, shape into small croquettes. Dip them in egg, then in bread crumbs, and fry in deep, hot fat to a dark rich brown. These will be found a delicious accompaniment to cold poultry.

CHESTNUT CREAM

Whip a pint of chilled double cream until stiff and dry and gently fold in half a cupful of sugar, vanilla extract to flavor and a cupful of chestnut pulp. This is made of chestnuts that have been shelled, blanched and boiled until tender, then pressed through a potato ricer. A small cupful of chopped, candied fruits that have been soaked in a lemon syrup is also a pleasing addition. Mix well, turn the mixture into a mould with a watertight cover and bury in chopped ice and rock salt for four or five hours before serving. Serve unmoulded, accompanied by an iced custard sauce.

DEVILLED CHESTNUTS

These make a delectable dish to serve with a salad course or with a preparation of cheese, like a fondue or soufflé. Blanch and shell the nuts in the manner already described and fry until well browned in just enough butter to prevent scorching. Sprinkle while hot with salt and paprika and serve immediately.

NESSERODE PUDDING

Shell and blanch thirty large French chestnuts, cover them with boiling water and cook for half an hour. Drain off the water, pound the nuts in a mortar and then rub through a puree sieve. Put into a saucepan one small cupful of water, add a cupful and a half of sugar and the grated yellow rind of one orange, and place over a moderate heat. Cook for twenty minutes; add the chestnut puree, and cook for five minutes longer. Take from the fire, and, when cold, add the strained juice of the orange and two quarts of stiffly whipped cream. Freeze slowly, as for ordinary ice cream and repack in a melon mould to ripen for a couple of hours. If preferred, a quart of rich boiled custard may be substituted for half the quantity of cream, but in that event, if the custard be sweetened, the amount of sugar should be reduced.

CHESTNUTS IN SALAD

Chestnuts are also much in favor in the making of various salads. For this purpose they must always be shelled, blanched, cooked in salted water until tender and then cooled and chilled. They combine particularly well with diced celery, chopped apples and endive, in fruit salads, or they may be piled on crisp lettuce leaves and merely moistened with a good French dressing.